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SOURCE Ethnikos Kiryx.

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FURTHER INFORMATION ON REPORTED PURGE OF KKE LEADER

Comment: A report published on 24 January 1953 in Ethnos, an Athens daily newspaper, stated that N. Zahariadis, the KKE (Greek Communist Party) leader, was expected to be purged. The following report, taken from the 22 and 23 January 1953 issues of Ethnikos Kiryx, gives further information on the reported purge of Zahariadis.

25X1A

On 22 January, Ethnikos Kiryx, an Athens daily newspaper, reported that, according to reliable information from Munich, Germany, N. Zahariadis, leader of the KKE, was suddenly taken "seriously ill" and was sent to a Budapest hospital, where the only patients admitted are persons under police surveillance.

At the same time, the paper said, it was reported that 2 days before Zahariadis was admitted to the hospital, agents of the Hungarian State Security Police, headed by a Soviet police inspector, searched Zahariadis' apartment in Budapest, where he lived with his girl friend, Roula Koukoulou or Hroni, while in that city.

According to the paper, the above information is not known to most Hungarian Communists. On the other hand, the paper continued, present at all political meetings of the Greek Communists in Hungary has been Petros Roussos (alias Polychronidis), the known agent and confidant of Moscow.

Ethnikos Kiryx said that a rumor is circulating in certain Communist circles in Budapest and Prague that Zahariadis' illness is a prelude to extensive purges in the KKE leadership. According to the paper, KKE members M. Porfyrogennis and Petros Roussos supposedly are behind a movement against Zahariadis, seeking to put an end to what they call their leader's "insane policy." Agents of the Soviet secret police are investigating Zahariadis' policy to determine whether it is beneficial or harmful to the Soviet policy in Greece, the paper said.

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Furthermore, the paper added, a certain person who recently escaped from Czechoslovakia to West Germany confirms the fact that Zahariadis seemed depressed and nervous on his return from Moscow, where he represented the KKE at the 19th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party. The paper said that Zahariadis then ordered his attendants immediately to begin the drafting of a long statement on the personality of Stalin and Stalin's influence on the "Greek People's Movement." These statements, continued the paper, full of inconsistencies and praises for Stalin, were proclaimed as "resolutions" of the Fifth should be Third Plenum of the KKE, "aiming at appeasing the Soviet leaders and in stabilizing Zahariadis' position in the KKE."(1)

On 23 January, Ethnikos Kiryx referred to an article appearing in the French newspaper Populaire, organ of the French Socialist Party, which, Ethnikos Kiryx said, confirmed reports that Zahariadis is about to be purged.

Ethnikos Kiryx said that according to well-founded reports, it seems that agents of the MVD (USSR Ministry of Internal Affairs) have conducted a thorough investigation in Greece and have received complaints and accusations against Zahariadis. Such complaints, according to the paper, were written by old cadres of the KKE and especially by G. Siantos' wife, who, in a note to the Soviet government, characterizes N. Zahariadis as a known agent of the "enemies of the People's Movement in Greece and the worst servant of Soviet policy." According to the paper, sharing similar views is Kon. Theos, "syndicalist leader" of the KKE, who lives in Budapest. Theos, when questioned by Soviet investigators, testified against Zahariadis' "false steps" and called Zahariadis "insane" and an extremist, the paper said.

At any rate, the paper went on, it is certain that Moscow has been informed of a movement in Greece instigated by old cadres of the KKE still in Greece, which movement aims at organizing "an illegal congress." This congress, according to the paper, will denounce Zahariadis because of the "crimes" he has committed against the "People's Movement" and will elect a new KKE Central Committee. The paper said that it is very probable that Moscow, fearing ridicule because of Zahariadis, will order him purged. Moreover, added the paper, there are positive indications that Kyros, Zahariadis' son, has been arrested and is being detained in isolation in Moscow.

Ethnikos Kiryx of the same date stated that it was also reported that Zahariadis, prior to his confinement in the hospital, had sent a note to the Hungarian State Security Police demanding the arrest of Petros Roussos and Partsalidis' wife, Avra Vlassi (alias Tatasopoulou). The paper said that after strict orders given by the Soviet secret police, however, the Hungarian State Security Police did not carry out this request. In fact, the paper added, Petros Roussos and Theos are directing the investigations against Zahariadis' clique.

The paper reported that Greek Communists in Budapest who heard that Zahariadis was in the hospital and tried to visit him were turned away by the Hungarian State Security Police. Furthermore, the paper went on to say, all communication between the communities and party organizations of the Greek Communists in Hungary and the Greek Communist guerrillas in Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Poland, etc., has been forbidden.(2)

SOURCES

1. Athens, Ethnikos Kiryx, 22 Jan 53
2. Ibid., 23 Jan 53

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- 2 -

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